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Birds

[SECOND EDITION.]

"Gems of the Orient"

(ILLUSTRATED).



THE ORIENTAL FRILL PIGEON.

BY

FRANK MACHIN,

Past President of the Oriental Frill Club.

Smithsonian Institution
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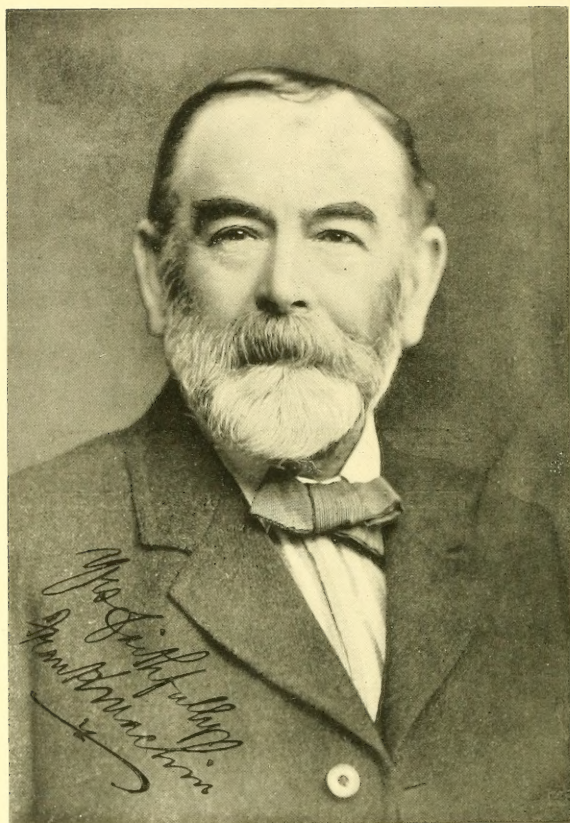


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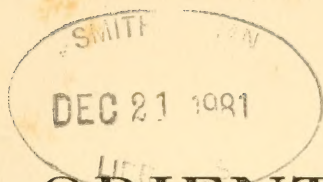
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THE ORIENTAL FRILL PIGEON.

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THE ORIENTAL FRILL PIGEON

WITH NOTES ON
BREEDING, MANAGEMENT
EXHIBITING, FEEDING, &c

BY
FRANK MACHIN

Past President of the Oriental Frill Club

SECOND EDITION.

THE MIDLAND COUNTIES HERALD LIMITED
: 145, CAMBRIDGE STREET, BIRMINGHAM :

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

Having received many requests from Oriental Frill Fanciers to reproduce in book form my series of articles which appeared in PIGEONS during 1917-1918, I make no apologies for its introduction. As stated in one of my early articles, without the aid of coloured illustrations it is difficult to convey to the amateur the differences in shades of colour as between, say, in the Satinette family, a Blue-laced, Sulphur-laced, or a Brunette; or in the Blondinette family, a Blue-laced, Sulphur-laced, Brown-laced, or a Red-laced; Black-laced and Dun-laced in either breeds present no difficulty, as one colour is counterpart of the other. However, I have done the next best thing, and that is to illustrate various varieties of the Oriental Frill family by photography from life, as, with the exception of the Crested Blue Turbiteen and the Blue-barred Blondinette, which were photographed from pictures

PREFACE.

done by the late J. W. Ludlow, all the others are photographs of birds in my own lofts.

The photographs were taken at the studio of THE HOMING PIGEON, LTD., The Crescent, Birmingham, and to those who know the difficulty in photographing live Pigeons, will agree their efforts have been highly satisfactory, and my personal thanks are due to Mr. Hedges, their photographer, for the patience and care he exercised in producing such excellent results. It will be found I have added a little here and there to my original articles, and as an Appendix have given the standard for Oriental Frills, which was drawn up by the late Mr. J. W. Ludlow and myself in 1893, and adopted by the Oriental Frill Club. The only variety not in existence at that time being the Black-laced and Dun-laced Satinettes, and which have been added since.

FRANK MACHIN.

January 1st, 1919.

HOW I BECAME AN ORIENTAL FRILL PIGEON FANCIER.

By FRANK MACHIN.

IT is now about fifty-five years since Oriental Frills, or Eastern Frills, as they were often termed then, were first introduced into this country by Mr. H. P. Caridia, a native of Smyrna. This gentleman was a natural-born fancier. He was possessed of great aesthetic tastes, and to listen to him describing a good specimen of the Oriental Frill family was a great treat.

The Satinette was the first to appear. At the time of their introduction Mr. Caridia resided in Manchester, where, I believe, some specimens were first exhibited before the members of the Manchester Columbarian Society.

In his notes published in "Fulton's Book on Pigeons," Mr. Caridia states that the breed was of great antiquity, for he had traced it back for 120 years. He procured his first pair from an old Priest in Smyrna, who informed him that they were also bred by his father and grandfather.

We have no definite information as to the composition of the breed, but as the Eastern fanciers were great admirers of short faced,

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short beaked, frilled varieties of Pigeons—as instanced in the Oriental Owl and Turbit—it is thought that the Satinette was produced by crossing these with a semi-wild Pigeon of Asia, possessing a pencilled plumage and marked or spotted tail. But be that as it may, or whatever the material used, these Eastern fanciers were possessed of a marvellous amount of patience and perseverance to have produced such a lovely Pigeon.

Yes, undoubtedly, these Eastern fanciers were, and are, fanciers in the truest sense of the word, possessing an inborn love for the birds themselves. This is obvious, as, be it noted, there was no incentive from the £ s. d. point of view, no shows to whet the appetite, no cups to win, or anything of that sort! There was nothing but the desire to produce birds which administered to their pleasure. And, although we have had, off and on, for over fifty years, consignments of Oriental Frills from Smyrna—principally through the agency of the late Mr. Caridia and the late Capt. Dobson—I know full well how difficult it was to induce the breeders to part with their best birds at any price!

HARRY KITCHEN'S EFFORTS.

As our old and lamented friend, Harry Kitchen—one of the oldest and one of the most generous members of the Oriental Frill Club, and who visited Smyrna and the district in company with Capt. Dobson on either one or two occasions

—told me, he had the greatest difficulty in this respect. Harry Kitchen visited all the best lofts, but only in one or two instances could he induce the owners to part with the birds that they themselves admired, and then only by Harry making several visits.

The Satinette then being firmly fixed, these Eastern fanciers turned their attention to producing other varieties of the Oriental Frill family, the Satinette playing a very important part in their production. Thus some fifteen years after the introduction of the Satinette we were introduced to the charming Blondinette. Other varieties followed from time to time—viz., the Brunette, Sulphurette, Blurette, Silverette, Vizzor, Turbiteen, and last, the Domino. And as to the latter, what an appropriate name.

It may not be known to some of our Oriental Frill admirers that the names of the different varieties by which we now know them were given by English fanciers, and that they are quite foreign to the Eastern breeders. The late Mr. J. W. Ludlow, one of the earliest devotees of the breed, was mainly responsible for the naming of the birds. And, although I think the names are somewhat puzzling to the uninitiated, yet I have never been able to find names more appropriate.

I think there is a peculiar charm in the names selected, and which fit in so admirably with the dainty beauty of the birds themselves. As I have said, to the novice, or uninitiated, a breed with so many “ettes” in the different

varieties is bewildering at first, and undoubtedly has been the cause of a good few fanciers hesitating to take them up. But this slight difficulty can easily be surmounted by anyone desirous of doing so. A visit or two to any of our shows where a liberal classification is given, a few questions asked of the older fanciers present about the birds on the spot, or a visit to any fancier's loft where most of the varieties are kept, would quickly dispel the difficulty.

It is, of course, so much easier to demonstrate the differences in tints and colourings between, say, a Blue-laced Satinette, Sulphurette, and a Brunette with the birds actually before one. The same may be said, of course, about the various members of the Blondinette family. But the various colours, both of Satinettes and Blondinettes, I shall fully deal with as I come to the different varieties. The blue-laced or spangled Satinette being the oldest variety and the first to make its appearance in this country, will first claim our attention, and the sub-varieties, viz., the Sulphurettes, Brunettes, etc., will follow in order.

I enter upon my task with the full knowledge of my imperfections, and I am fully conscious of the fact that there are fanciers living to-day who can claim a more lengthy knowledge of the breed. I have only to mention the name of Mr. A. J. Blackmore, the able contributor of Oriental Oddments in PIGEONS. Mr. Blackmore has known Oriental Frills pretty well since they were

first introduced into this country, and I have always read his notes with considerable pleasure and profit to myself.

Other writers there are living who have generously given us the benefit of their long experience of the breed. I refer to such well known contributors as Mr. J. F. King, of Oxford, and Mr. Hugh Seaton, of London. Both these gentlemen have helped on the breed considerably. Whilst of writers who have passed away, and who were great authorities on the breed, the names of Mr. H. P. Caridia, Mr. J. W. Ludlow, and Capt. F. B. Dobson, will for all time stand pre-eminent.

FIRST OWLS, THEN ANTWERPS.

From a lad of seven years of age I have been a keen lover of Pigeons, and with the exception of a couple of years, whilst serving my apprenticeship to a chemist in a small country town, I have never been without them. No matter what the variety was in those early days, I thoroughly enjoyed keeping them. But if I had a preference it was for the Flier. I loved the sport of racing Pigeons, and I think this love for racing must have been born in me, for as quite young lads my elder brother and I spent many early summer mornings in our bed-room racing flies from the extremity of our room to the window.

At the age of twenty-two I bought my first pair of good birds—a pair of blue English Owls. The cock was a real gem, and with which I won

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a third prize the first time I exhibited him in a class of 43, Any Variety, Local Class. Well, that did it ! From that initial success I can trace my career as a breeder of high-class Pigeons. It was good-bye to my odds and ends, such as a few Tumblers, an odd short-distance Flier or two, and a few cross breeds.

I hear my young budding fanciers saying: " But what has all this to do with Oriental Frills? " Ah, well ! Just be a little patient, and I will explain. The little blue English Owl I have just mentioned had awakened within me a love of the beautiful in Pigeons, and, although it is over forty years ago since I possessed this bird I can close my eyes and see the beauty of him as clearly to-day as I could then. In fact, I shall never forget his short curved beak, rounded head, profusion of frill and gullet, short, cobby body, and jaunty carriage. Those features are stamped indelibly on my memory. And from this bird undoubtedly I owe my admiration for short-faced varieties of Pigeons.

Having at this time to change my residence, and not knowing if I would have accommodation for keeping Pigeons, I sold my pair of Owls to a fancier near by—and very sorry I was to part with them.

The next breed I took up was short-faced Antwerps, a Pigeon I am particularly fond of, and which I bred successfully for a number of years. It was during my early days in breeding

them that as a commercial traveller I had to visit Birmingham. This was in 1876.

LUDLOW AND ORIENTAL FRILLS.

And now, my young friends, we are getting on the trail of the Frills. I had often heard of the name of Ludlow, of Birmingham, in connection with Pigeons, and as a noted breeder of Antwerps. Therefore, being interested in the breed, I naturally sought an early opportunity of paying him a visit. At that time he resided in Vauxhall Road. I little thought of the treat I had in store or the revelations that visit would have for me.

I had called to see his Antwerps, and a grand collection I found—but what else did I find? I saw in a pretty aviary a breed of Pigeons that I had never seen or heard of before! I was at once captivated. I beheld for the first time the Gems from the Orient! How like in form and symmetry were they to my blue English Owl. But in markings and colourings how exquisitely more beautiful. Thus at first sight I was head over heels in love with them. In that comparatively small collection were blue-laced Satinettes, blue-laced Blondinettes, blue-barred Blondinettes, Vizors, and Turbiteens—a sight never to be forgotten!

To those who knew Mr. Ludlow, it goes without saying he gave to me a very warm and hearty welcome. And that first visit to his

home was destined to lay the foundation of a life-long friendship.

On my next visit to Mr. Ludlow's lofts, I purchased a blue-barred Blondinette cock and a pair of blue-laced Blondinettes. Thus I made my first start in Oriental Frills. That blue-barred cock was one of the most perfect Pigeons I ever owned. The first time I exhibited him was at the Palace, where in a mixed class of blue-laced, Sulphurs, brown-laces, and barred, he won an equal second with 29 birds competing ! Not a bad start ! The next essay was at the Albert Palace, Mr. Joseph Smith judging, where my bird won 1st and cup. Following his success a month or two later at Liverpool, he was placed 1st, resulting in a very tempting offer being made for him by Mr. Peter Verdon, who, at that time, and for many years afterwards, was one of our best breeders of Oriental Frills. Having no mate for the cock, I accepted Mr. Verdon's offer, and with the money I invested in a pair of blue-laced Satinettes, purchased from Mr. Ludlow's collection.

Although Mr. Ludlow's name will most likely crop up pretty frequently, I would like to state, here and now, the immense influence his fifty years or more experience had upon the breed. I count it most fortunate that a gentleman of such refined tastes as he undoubtedly possessed, should have been one of the first fanciers in this country to be on the spot,

so to speak, when the various members of the family of Frills arrived from Smyrna.

I may add in connection that by this time Mr. Caridia had left Manchester and taken up his abode in Birmingham. This incident in itself was a fortunate one as bearing upon the future welfare of the breed. Mr. Caridia, although a Greek by nationality, spoke our language fluently, and thus in coming to Birmingham—which might at that period be justly termed the Mecca of Pigeon fanciers—he was destined to make the acquaintance of Mr. Ludlow, a fancier after his own heart—one who could not only converse with him on all the charms of the Eastern breeds of Pigeons, but could by his brush and pencil portray them so beautifully. And it is in this connection wherein Mr. Ludlow's great talents have had such a beneficial influence on Frills. The same may be said of almost all the breeds of Pigeons in existence. It would, in fact, be interesting to know how many fanciers of Pigeons, and I will add poultry, he influenced by his beautiful drawings.

I made the acquaintance of Mr. Caridia a few months after that of Mr. Ludlow, meeting him for the first time at Mr. Ludlow's house. Needless to say, their conversation, mostly on Pigeons, and Oriental Frills in particular, was most interesting to myself. On many occasions afterwards it was my privilege and pleasure to join them in the evenings at Vauxhall Road. And I can

assure my young friends that I was an excellent listener on those occasions.

THE SATINETTE FAMILY.

Having given a brief history of Oriental Frills and how they found their way into this country, I will proceed to deal with the Satinette family, commencing with the oldest member, the blue-laced. And, bear in mind, as stated at the outset, my notes are written chiefly for the information and guidance of the novice, the admirers of Frills who have had absolutely no experience of the breed, and to whose ears the sound of “ettes” is a mystery. Therefore, I shall do my best to make my remarks as plain and simple as possible.

How often have I been asked the question by friends who know I have a weakness for the hobby:—

“What kind of Pigeons do you keep, Mr. Machin?”

“Oh,” I say, “I keep what are known as Oriental Frills.”

“Oh! those funny kinds of Pigeons with ruffles round their necks!”

“No,” I say, “what you have in your mind, I think, are called Jacobins.”

“Ah! Jacobins. That’s the kind. Then yours are not Jacobins?”

“No,” I reply. “Mine are Oriental Frills—Satinettes, Blondinettes, etc.”



BLUE-LACED SATINETTE HEN.

And if no further questions are asked the matter ends. But if asked to describe Oriental Frills to them, then, as a rule, my difficulty begins. Such terms as lacing, frill, gullet, grouse leg, spot tail, crested, plain headed, etc., no doubt appears very puzzling to anyone who has but a hazy idea of what lacing or pencilling means in speaking of a Satinette or Blondinette.

I think the best illustration one can give is to liken them to a picotee or carnation, for the lacing in some of the colours resemble these beautiful flowers very closely. And for that reason we get the appropriate term, "The flowers of the Fancy."

The blue-laced Satinette was the first member of the Oriental family to make its way into this country. They were mostly what are called plain-headed. The term plain-headed means without the crest or peak. The term blue-laced requires a little explanation. Blue has no connection with the lacing, although I have seen birds with this undesirable colour mixed with the colour of the lacing we like.

It is the colour of the rump and tail which distinguishes this member from his brothers—the Sulphurette and Brunette. The colour is about the ordinary shade of almost any blue Pigeon. The rump and tail of both the Sulphurette and Brunette is a soft fawn or French grey shade.

The Blue-laced Satinettes were not, strictly speaking, laced as we know lacing to-day, when they first made their appearance in this country,

but were pencilled, spangled, or arrow tipped. They were what is often termed tri-colour. The ground colour was nothing like so clear as we see in the birds of the present day. The colourings in the markings were richer, if I may use the term, than our present-day birds—a mixture of pinky brown, purple black and white or pale grey. And if a bird was very regularly marked with a good clear spot tail, and possessed the other good features, such as frill, gullet, grouse leg, and a good napper, he looked very handsome indeed.

In fact, there are fanciers still with us to-day who remember the early day Satinettes who maintain that in comparison with our up-to-date specimens, so far as colouring is concerned, they prefer the former. Well, I suppose it is purely a matter of taste. To my mind, both are handsome. But for my own part, I give preference to the modern.

I possess a picture, a water colour, painted by the late Mr. J. W. Ludlow some thirty years ago, of a group of Oriental Frills, and which I value very much. In this group is a pair of Blue-laced Satinettes of the old pattern so far as colour is concerned. I also have another picture by the same artist. It is also a group of Frills, painted in 1904. In this group is a portrait of a Crested Blue-laced Satinette cock which I bred over twenty years ago, and which was known as the "Borcarme Cock." It was one of the early light-laced birds, and I venture

to think that if fifty Oriental Frill admirers were to see these two pictures with a view of voting which of the two Satinette cocks they preferred, forty-nine, or possibly the whole number, would plump for the light-laced one. As, apart from the grand all-round structural properties this bird possessed, his lacing and ground colour were superb.

Mr. Ludlow was particularly charmed with this bird, and remarked to me after placing him first and two specials at the Palace Show in 1896, that the bird represented the biggest advance in Blue-laced Satinettes he had ever seen! And meeting Mr. Ludlow some few months after the Palace Show, he having heard that I had sold the bird to go abroad, I received quite a fatherly castigation at his hands for allowing such a top-sawyer to leave the country.

I think our young fanciers won't mind if I give them a little of this bird's history before passing on. The first time I exhibited him was at Birkenhead, under Mr. Peter Verdon. I also showed his brother, a plain-headed cock, in the same class. The latter also a grand Pigeon. Mr. Verdon placed the plain head first, and the crested second, and told me afterwards that they were the best pair of Satinettes he had ever seen. This was in September.

The following November I showed the crested at the Palace as stated, under Mr. Ludlow, where he was placed first. At that time, my old friend, Harry Kitchen, used to offer a special for the

best headed Frill in the section, old and young competing. I also used to offer one for the best laced bird. My Satinette cock won both specials. This was quite an achievement for a young bird, so far as the "head" special went, as, be it noted, my young friends, the head of an Oriental improves and thickens up considerably up to four or five years old.

Shortly after the Palace Show I received an enquiry from a Belgian gentleman named Borcarme, for a pair of Satinettes—and "they must be good ones," he said. I offered him the Palace cock with a suitable hen for £25. This offer he accepted. I also sold the same gentleman several other pairs of Frills—Turbiteens and Blondinettes.

I exhibited at, and attended, the following Palace Show—1897—and was both surprised and delighted to find that Mons. Borcarme was exhibiting in the Oriental classes, his birds being shown in splendid bloom and condition. He was very successful, winning several firsts and other prizes.

Amongst his first prize winners was the crested Satinette cock I had sold him only a few months previously. He was catalogued at £25. I was naturally delighted to see the bird again, and to see him at the top of his class. Moreover, I longed to again possess him. The result was that I planted myself in good time the next morning at the sales office, and at once secured him. I never parted with £25 with more pleasure!



BLACK ORIENTAL TURBIT COCK.

But I was not destined to keep him for more than about fourteen months. Our then president of the Oriental Frill Club, Mr. T. W. H. Ashton, one of the most generous patrons not only of the club, but of the Oriental Frill Fancy, took a great fancy to the bird and asked me to put him on price. It took me a whole day to make up my mind, but not liking to disappoint Mr. Ashton by refusing to sell, I put him on price to him, and in return received a very handsome cheque. The Pigeon continued his successful career in the show pen, and, I believe, sired one or two nice youngsters. He was a very robust, healthy bird, and I do not think was ever sick or ill. When Mr. Ashton retired from the Fancy, which would be about three years after he purchased the bird, he made a present of him to my friend, Mr. George Leech, of Rochdale, in whose lofts the "Borcarme Cock" spent the remainder of his days.

As my young friends perhaps are aware, a standard for most breeds of Pigeons has been framed for the guidance of the breeder and for those who may be called upon from time to time to judge them at our exhibitions. The standard for Oriental Frills was drawn up about twenty-five years ago, and it may be an item of interest to some of the more recent members to know that the late Mr. J. W. Ludlow and myself were selected by the Oriental Frill Club to carry out the work. We met on several occasions at Mr. Ludlow's house in Vauxhall

Road, Birmingham, and every point was thoroughly gone into in reference to the breed. Ultimately the club standard, as drawn up, was adopted.

It has been slightly revised since, but for all practical purposes it remains the same as originally adopted. I think we were very fortunate in having so experienced a breeder as Mr. Ludlow to guide us in this matter, especially when it came to the important features of lacings or markings, because I distinctly remember when this question was discussed Mr. Ludlow was most emphatic on the necessity of not drawing any hard and fast lines. This, interpreted, meant we must not say in our standard when speaking of lacing that the feathers must be narrow, or finely edged, or medium, or broad only. Or again, that no bird should be considered standard which did not possess the one kind of lacing or marking. No, our standard, said Mr. Ludlow, must include laced, spangled or arrow-tipped, and so long as the markings are regular, lacing narrow, medium or broad, well defined, and even (which, I may add, they invariably are), they are all eligible for the show pen. As Mr. Ludlow very justly contended, drawing hard and fast rules would mean the shutting out of some of our best birds.

TYPE AND STRUCTURAL PROPERTIES.

For the information of my young friends, I may state that so far as what is known as type

and structural properties, they are much the same in most of the different varieties of the Frill family, the slight difference being in size of body. For instance, it is quite natural for a Turbiteen or an Oriental Turbit to be slightly larger than a Satinette, Blondinette, or a Blulette. The latter, as a rule, are the smallest of any of the Frill family.

If in leaving out for the moment the Oriental Turbit, the head formation of all the other varieties should be about the same. That is, in speaking of a standard head. This should be large, full, broad, an unbroken curve from tip of beak to back of skull, wide mouth, beak short and of good substance, if crested, crest well set-up, with what is termed a nice needle-point finish, and the deeper or wider the feathers are from eye to the mane or ridge of feathers under the crest the better the bird looks ! If the bird is what we term plain headed, which means without crest, the head should be full at the back.

We want plenty of gullet or dewlap, which is a ridge of skin growing from just under the lower mandible and reaching down the throat to where the frill starts. And this we want in abundance. Nothing spoils an otherwise good Oriental more than a poor or scanty frill.

The shins and toes should be nicely clothed with feathers, except in the Oriental Turbit and the Domino. These two varieties are clean-legged, which means without feathers. The body should be fairly short, and present a cobby

appearance with erect and jaunty carriage. Blue-laced Satinettes, Bluettes, Sulphurettes, Brunettes, Blue-laced, Sulphur-laced and Brown-laced Blondinettes should possess spot tails, the spot being likened in shape to those lovely coloured spots or eyes in a peacock's tail.

This feature in the varieties I have named is one of great value, and one we must do our best to preserve. Our American cousins look upon it as a great asset in an Oriental Frill, and rightly so. Undoubtedly the perfect tail spot is one of the greatest charms of the breed. Unfortunately in the attempt to breed lightly laced birds, the spot tail has suffered, and we get a good percentage of what are called gay-tailed birds. This means the light colour of the spot has gradually crept up the tail feathers until the well-defined spot has disappeared, and thus we pay the penalty in our desire for breeding lightly laced birds.

There are, of course, lightly laced birds with good spot tails in some of our lofts to-day, but I can assure my young friends that they are not plentiful by any means, and to retrieve it we shall have to hark back a little.

Another undesirable feature in the craze for light laced birds is the lacing on back. This becomes very washy and undefinable. Fortunately, the breed lends itself and is very amenable to the exercise of a bit of common sense on the part of the breeder. And the lightly laced hen with her gay tail, says to the old "Pigeon Dorum,"

as he contemplates how he shall mate up his birds for the season:—

“ You select for my husband a rather heavy laced one. It does not matter if he has a dark feather or two in his tail. They will counteract my gay ones, and my progeny may recover also that nice lacing on the back, which I appear to have lost.”

MATING-UP ORIENTALS.

Now, my young friends, I have given you some idea of what a good specimen should be, but please do not jump to the conclusion that such birds are plentiful. Birds which approach the standard are few and far between, and when obtainable fetch a high figure. But with patience and perseverance it is not impossible to produce them. Start out with the best material you can afford to obtain. Get the ideal bird well into your knowledge box, and then keep quietly pegging away.

If you are starting, say, with a pair of Blue-laced Satinets, select, if you can, say, a plain headed cock and a crested hen, or vice versa. If possible the colour of the hen should be darker than the cock. Now, supposing the hen has the fault of being rather flat on top of skull, let the cock be good in this respect, by having what we call a good top skull.

The same rule applies to all other points. If there is a serious defect in one bird try to remedy it by having that particular point good in

the other. Of course, if you can obtain birds with good all-round points, so much the better. Always bear in mind that in mating up a pair of laced birds it is best to have one dark and the other light. Don't mate two very lightly laced together, or two dark ones. Setting of beak is another very important point. By this I mean the angle of the beak in relation to the head. The beak should take a downward tendency. What we term straight-faced or pokey beaked is a bad fault. The mouth line and the beak should be in harmony with the curvature of the head.

Both Brunettes and Sulphurettes (where not separately mated) can, with advantage, be mated to the Blue-laced Satinette, especially in the case of the Brunette, if you wish to improve the tail spot, as invariably the Brunette is very good in this respect. The same may be said of the Brown-laced Blondinette. I cannot give the reason, but the Brown-laced Blondinette preserves the spot tail more than any other of the spot tailed Blondinette family.

HOW THE MARKINGS COME.

Reverting to the advantage of mating crested with plain headed birds, I may add that this method has a tendency to keep the crest needle pointed. The closeness of the feathers on the plain headed bird no doubt helps to produce this much desired feature, as by continually breeding from crested birds on both sides the crest in time becomes loose or shelly.

There is just one feature I should like to point out to the novice in breeding probably for the first time spot tailed Satinettes. If the youngsters come dingy looking in colour of feather, with probably no tail spots, don't be disappointed. Wait and see the transformation. Watch for those light coloured laced feathers appearing at about ten to twelve weeks old on the wing just below the butts. This is, in fact, where the charm of the breed comes in—the gradual transformation from sombre to gay.

Many years ago I sold to a young fancier a pair of Blue-laced Satinettes. He wanted good ones, and was prepared to pay a good price. I sent him one of my best pairs. This would be at the beginning of the breeding season. About the following June or July I received a letter from him, not in a tone one could call friendly, enclosing some feathers taken from the young ones he had bred from the pair I sold him. He stated that he was very disappointed, and that I could have the old birds back at half the price he had paid me for them, and the youngsters he would kill—or something to that effect. I could see from the nest feathers sent that he had got something good, and I wrote telling him to have a little patience. Then I thought he would change his opinion. He did so, and was rewarded by breeding and showing two of the best Blue-laced Satinette cocks of that year. In fact, for years he was one of our best Satinette breeders.

To-day he is one of my most sincere friends, and one of the oldest members of our club.

Our Oriental cousins in America, whom I may say, are great admirers of Oriental Frills, drew up a standard for their guidance. I have not seen a copy, nor do I know if it has been completed or finally adopted by the American Oriental Frill Club, but through the kindness of Mr. Twombly, the proprietor and editor of the American "Pigeon News"—an interesting paper which I get regularly—I gather in reference to the black and dun-laced Blondinettes that some of the fanciers were advocating the exclusion from the show pen of all birds which are laced or frosted on the head. And that none but solid coloured ones should be admitted.

Well, everyone to their tastes, and if a fancier prefers a solid coloured head to a frosted, by all means allow him to enjoy his fancy. But to say that none but such should be allowed to appear in the show pen is to shut out birds possessing a most pleasing and charming acquisition. Both, to my mind, are beautiful and provide another illustration of Mr. Ludlow's contention that in the matter of lacing and markings we must not draw hard and fast lines. I shall refer again to this point when dealing with the Blondinette family.

“ CLIMAX ” BLONDINETTE COCK.

I did not select this bird for illustration with any idea of depicting an ideal Blondinette,



BLACK-LACED BLONDINETTE COCK,
"THE CLIMAX."

DEVELOPMENT OF LACING.

although, taking him all round, he does not fall very short in this respect. The photograph and reproduction are very clever, but to say they flatter would be to do an injustice to the bird. He has a better head than appears in the picture, and the position or attitude depicted is not one of his best by any means. But that is no fault of the photographer. An exhibitor taking his terrier into the show ring, do what he will, at times cannot coax the dog to show himself to the best advantage. It is the same in taking a photo. of a Pigeon.

DEVELOPMENT OF LACING.

I selected this bird in order to demonstrate the wonderful development in lacing. Also, to put in a word of warning both to young and old fanciers alike, in reference to the lacing or frostiness on the head.

I have named this bird "The Climax," but be it understood this remark applies more particularly to the head. We do not want white-headed Blondinettes, and this bird is as far as we may go in this direction.

I hope my young friends will not weary if I mention the development in the Black and Dun-laced Blondinette during the past forty years. I think it would be more correct to describe the birds of this colour when they first came to this country, and for several years afterwards, as black and dun barred, for there was very little

lacing to be seen. The tails were laced, and they had a whitish bar.

I have a picture of a group of Oriental Frills which were the property of Mr. Peter Verdon, of Liverpool, taken about 35 years ago. In that picture is a very typical black-laced, so-called, Blondinette cock. Just such a marked bird as I have described, and this bird was a first prize Palace winner. But it was only a question of time, and with judicious matings and those two all-important virtues, patience and perseverance, lacing gradually but surely made its appearance.

And here I am tempted to quote a little stanza I once heard, and which I think appropriate, as bearing upon the present subject:—

Slowly moves the march of ages,
 Slowly grows the Forest King,
 Slowly to perfection cometh
 Every good and perfect thing.

TWO NOTABLE BIRDS.

And thus the lacing of the black Blondinette gradually crept up until we were rewarded by getting it up to and round the shoulder butts. The first I saw was a plain-headed hen in the lofts of Mr. Caridia, just before he left Birmingham for his native home in Smyrna. To say I was charmed at the sight of this bird would be to use a very mild expression. She was, indeed, a gem—a true Oriental Frill in every respect.

She had a very round head, perfect carriage, compact body, and the most marvellous frill I

ever saw. Added to this was her superb lacing. No one need wonder that I was head over heels in love with her. £15 was the price asked, and, although I tried to woo her owner to let me take her at a less figure (my pocket being very low at that particular time), I could make no impression upon him, and had to be content to take the image of the bird away with me instead. I am pleased to say that the bird has remained on my memory, undiminished, ever since.

Other black Blondinettes then began to make their appearance with lacing up to the shoulder. One cock particularly stands out in my mind. This was a bird which our older fanciers well remember, the "Hall cock." This bird was bred in 1898 by Mr. Geo. Hall, of Birkenhead. And why I single it out particularly from other good black laces which were appearing at about the same period is to demonstrate another most charming development which this bird possessed to a remarkable degree. That was the lacing underneath the body. It is no exaggeration to say that he was almost as well laced underneath as he was on the top. And apart from his marvellous lacing had a grand head.

Now I would like my young friends to bear in mind that the neck and head in this bird, and all others at that period, were solid black. And here I would like us to stop and think for a while, and as naturalists, reason things out a little. We have watched the lacing gradually creep up from the bar to the shoulder butts. We have also here

an instance of the lacing making its appearance just below the breast, travelling down right underneath, even down to the foot feather.

Such being the case, is it to be wondered that later on we find the lacing creeping up to the neck and finally crowning nature's work by planting it on the head? No, nature may, and does, play us false at times, but her workings, as a rule, are very true and accurate.

This brings us back to the bird illustrated, "the climax in lacing." Now the first Blondinette I saw with this frostiness on the head was a dun-laced hen, bred and exhibited by my friend, Mr. James F. King, of Oxford. She was a bird, he named, I believe, "Silver Queen." She was shown at Leeds Smithfield Show. I just cannot remember the year, but I should say it is about 20 years ago. I was judging the Oriental Frills on that occasion, and was particularly charmed with this hen. I had no hesitation in placing her first in her class, and ultimately awarding her the challenge bowl for best young Oriental Frill in the show.

Now I have always associated this hen as laying the foundation for the appearance from time to time of the lacing on the head of our black and dun-laced Blondinettes. No breeder has so consistently, during the last twenty years, at all events, produced so many perfectly laced Blondinettes in these colours as Mr. J. F. King. And I think without consulting his stud book I should

say "Silver Queen" played a very important part in this achievement.

HONOUR WHERE HONOUR IS DUE.

We will take "The Climax" cock, for instance. The honour of breeding this Pigeon lies with Mr. Hugh Seaton, and if he never bred another bird during his life-time, his name will always be associated with the present generation of Oriental Frill fanciers as having bred one of the most beautiful black-laced Blondinettes that was ever seen. But the credit of producing the strain lies with Mr. King, for Mr. Seaton gave me to understand there was a good deal of the King blood in his composition. So I say all honour and credit to both.

Being desirous of obtaining a really good picture of "Climax," I paid a visit to the studio of the late Mr. J. W. Ludlow in the early spring of 1916, taking the cock and a similarly black-laced hen with me. Strange to say, it happened to be Mr. Ludlow's birthday. I had not seen him for some time, and it goes without saying, we spent a few very happy hours together. We had discussed Oriental Frills on so many occasions in the past, especially the development of lacing, that I knew I had in the basket a treat in store for him.

We had the two birds put in a cage, and, needless to say, the dear old veteran was simply delighted. But he was not in the least surprised.

He knew perfectly well, as a student of nature, that the development in lacing was certain to come sooner or later. Anyhow, he carefully sketched the birds, dotting down any particular features they possessed, etc., and after a further chat on the Fancy generally, and a hearty invitation to come again soon, I bade him good-bye, bringing my birds away with me.

Alas ! I never thought it was to be the last good-bye. Mr. Ludlow's death took place on Easter morning, within four or five weeks of my visit. He submitted a drawing of the pair of Blondinettes for my approval, and which I returned with only very slight suggestions for alteration. He started to work upon the picture, and had been working upon it for several days, when the Great Call came to lay aside his brush and pencil. Nature had given out. Calling his daughter to him, he said:—

“My work is finished. I cannot go on any longer.”

And within a week or so he had passed the barrier to the Great Beyond. Thus the last work done by the greatest delineator of Poultry and Pigeons in our time was upon his favourite breed of Pigeons—Oriental Frills.

Having for all practical purposes dealt with the blue-laced Satinette, we will proceed to deal with the rest of the family. The Sulphurette comes next in order. This is a very charming colour, and in order that my young friends may

ONE CRESTED AND ONE PLAIN.

understand what is meant by the term Sulphurette, I will explain. The ground colour, which should be as clear as possible, is diffused by the pale sulphur or yellow tint.

The colour of the feathers on rump and down to tail spots is a soft fawny drab tint. As a rule, the lacing in this colour is sharp and well defined, and the tail spots are well formed. But as a rule Sulphurettes are not quite so strong in head properties as the blue-laced. But be that as it may, they make a very pleasing and striking appearance in the show pen.

I have recommended when possible to mate the colours together. But if necessary, or where a change of blood is advisable, to mate a clear ground coloured blue-laced Satinette with a Sulphurette, or a lightly laced Brunette.

I have produced excellent results by infusing a dash of the black-laced Satinette into the Sulphurs. This I discovered by accident when commencing on my task of producing black and dun-laced Satinettes. But I may add that there was an equal mixture of blue-laced Satinette infused as well, which I will explain when coming to the black-laced. I never bred better or more beautifully tinted Sulphurettes than I did when I was perfecting the black-laced.

ONE CRESTED AND ONE PLAIN.

And just at that time, now over 20 years ago, I received an enquiry from a fancier in Holland

for a pair of sulphur Satinettes. I was enabled to select a pair as like each other, both cock and hen, as two peas in a swad. I never saw a more beautiful pair of Sulphurs in my life, and my opinion was confirmed by the recipient, who wrote saying how very pleased he was with them, and that they were the most perfect pair of Oriental Frills he ever saw.

Bear in mind, my young friends, the Continental fanciers were great on having perfectly matched pairs, and in this case the order was for each bird to be crested. Had it been left to me, I should have sent, say, the hen plain headed, as undoubtedly from a breeding point of view, as I have already emphasised, it is better to breed from one bird crested and the other plain headed.

I give this experience both to the older and younger breeders of Frills for what it is worth. That is, the infusion of black in the production of Sulphurs. The only point against it, to my mind, being the difference in tail markings, the blacks being laced tails and the other spot tailed. Still, the Sulphurs I have mentioned had perfect spot tails.

Before closing my notes on Sulphur Satinettes, I would like to mention a Sulphurette hen I had in 1898, which was descended from the "Borcarme" cock, already referred to. She was a beautiful hen, and, with the exception of being a trifle long in face, was the most perfect



TAIL OF BLUETTE COCK.

Sulphur I ever saw. Her career in the show pen was very successful, particularly at the old Haymarket shows, Liverpool, where for four years in succession she won first prize, beating the cocks for special on two occasions; three shows out of the four being judged by Mr. Peter Verdon. She was a very fascinating Pigeon; very tame, and consequently a great pet. She appeared very much attached to me, and as often as not would, on entering her loft, fly on to my shoulder. On one occasion, when showing her at the Palace, a few fancier friends and myself were going through the Frills, and when we came to her pen my friends remarked they thought she had recognised me; a remark I volunteered to give them a demonstration. Obtaining permission from one of the stewards to take the bird out of its pen, I placed her on the top. After talking to her for a short time, I commenced walking slowly up the avenue for a distance of 25 yards, she following; and, as I turned to retrace my steps, she did likewise, following all the way, and finally allowed me to pick her up and put her back in her pen—needless to say, much to the amusement of my friends.

Brunettes are next in order, and practically the same method of mating may be applied as in the Sulphurs. The colour of the rump and tail is similar to the Sulphurettes. But the colour of the lacing is of a brownish grey tint, very

pleasing when the lacing is nice and sharp, and, as I have said, possessing good tail spots. I should certainly recommend keeping these colours together when possible. But you will do no mischief by mating with either blue-laced or Sulphurs.

BLUETTES AND SILVERETTES.

Now we come to the next in order, and one of the most charming branches of the Satinette family, viz., the Bluette and Silverette, or what some of our Oriental Frill breeders prefer to call blue and silver barred Satinettes. Well, I don't know that it much matters whether we stick to the name they were first christened by when they arrived in this country, or the name changed to barred, so long as fanciers know them. Certainly judged by the code we apply to the Blondinette family, "barred" would be quite in order, as we speak of the blue and silver barred Blondinettes after the laced varieties.

The Bluette and Silverette are, to my mind, one of the most charming varieties of the Satinette family. There is a daintiness about them that at once appeals to one. As a rule, they are slightly smaller in body, and the colours are so soft and delicate. I think the soft blue in the Bluette is the loveliest blue to be seen in any Pigeon. Add to this a pure white bar, with a narrow black edging and good tail spots, and you have a bird, with its jaunty carriage, a perfect little Doo!



BLUETTE COCK.

BLUETTES AND SILVERETTES.

The same may be said of the Silverette, the shade of the colour being much softer than one finds in silver Pigeons of any kind. In the matter of bar, we have considerably improved upon it since they were first introduced. I say we, but I do not wish to give English breeders all the credit for that, as undoubtedly the Eastern fanciers gave us a good lift in that direction, as I will explain.

But I think it best to inform my young friends that when Bluettes and Silverettes first came to this country, they had what were termed tri-coloured bars. That is, a bar of three colours. The bar itself was a very pale, pinky colour, not absolutely white, edged with a decided pink, and then a further edging of black, which undoubtedly was very pretty.

I remember seeing about 25 to 30 such birds in one aviary at Acocks Green, near Birmingham, about 30 years ago. They made a very pretty show. But none of them had the pure white bar with black edging, such as we have in our best birds of to-day.

About twenty years ago, through the agency of my friend, Mr. Fred Ashford, of Saxmundham, I obtained a Silverette cock, plain headed, and a crested Bluette hen. The cock had a big strong head and beak, but was a bit grizzly in colour and rusty in bar. The hen was a gem, and hard to find fault with—superb colour on wings, lovely bar, but not so white as we have them to-

day. She had a beautiful head, frill, gullet, and foot feather.

I bred three youngsters from these birds the year I had them. One of the youngsters was a cock I gave to my old friend, David Watson, of East Dulwich, who at that time was breeding Bluettes, but could not get them without the objectionable third bar showing rather prominently.

OBJECTIONABLE THIRD BAR.

I may here explain to my young friends that all Bluettes and Silverettes are liable to produce a third bar, not a complete bar, but just the commencement of one, above the proper bar, and which usually is solid in colour. This, of course, considerably detracts from the bar proper.

Also, in Mr Watson's birds, there was a slight chequering, showing the unmistakable traces of having been crossed with blue-laced Satinettes, which I may state here, is an excellent thing to do, so far as the blue-laced Satinette is concerned, especially when they are getting too washy in lacing and gay in tail. A cross with a Bluette acts as a correction. One of the best plain headed Satinettes, blue laced, I ever had, was a direct cross between a Bluette and a blue-laced Satinette. This bird won the cup at the Dairy Show. His ground colour was remarkably clear, with well defined lacing.

I mention this bird for another reason. When he was about four years old, Captain

Turton was in want of a Bluette cock. This would be about the middle of the breeding season. He wrote me for one. But what Bluette cocks I had were all paired up and breeding. I, however, offered him on loan the half-bred Bluette cock already mentioned, which he readily accepted. As a result, he bred from him the best young Bluette (a cock) of the season.

The bird had a wonderful head for a Bluette, a lovely shade of colour on the wings, and the best bar I had ever seen. His two faults were being slightly bishoped on one wing and rather gay in tail. But with these faults he held his own in the show pen for several years, and ultimately came into my possession.

MEANING OF TERM "BISHOPED."

I would explain to novices that the term "bishoped" means a patch of white at the shoulder, where, of course, the feathers should be solid or laced, as the case may be—in this case solid.

That pair of birds, procured for me by Mr. Ashford, laid the foundation of pretty well all the best Bluettes and Silverettes of the present day. I can trace nearly every good bird for the past 18 years or over as being descended from them. Of course, with judicious matings we have improved upon the originals, especially in purity of colour in bar.

I need say very little as to the mating of them. They are so mixed up, blue and silver,

that beginners in Frills can mate either two birds of the same colour or one of each. There are very few plain headed birds amongst them, nearly all being crested. If you have a plain headed one, use him, or her, by all means with a crested one.

The Vizor shall next claim our attention. This variety of the Satinette family is very rare nowadays, like the proverbial tortoiseshell tom cat. They can be laced or barred as in the blue-laced Satinette, or as the Bluette. But they have a masked head, like the Domino, or similar to what you see in the Nun or the Modena. When one sees a really good specimen it is a most striking bird.

All the Vizors I have seen from abroad were crested, but I never saw one with what I should call a perfect mask, that is quite solid in colour on head; there were generally a few white feathers showing. Whether the variety was plentiful in the early days, I know not, but during my experience of the Frill Fancy I have only known some half-dozen good specimens.

Some 28 years ago I obtained a beautifully laced pair, which were imported from Smyrna by Mr. Ashford, but were very faulty in mask. All the same, they were a very striking pair of birds, and wonderful breeders, for they bred nearly every variety of Frills except Vizors; blue-laced Blondinettes, blue-barred Blondinettes, blue-laced Satinettes, and white Owls.



BLACK-LACED SATINETTE COCK.

BLACK AND DUN-LACED.

Some of these were quite good standard birds. I eventually sold the pair to go abroad.

BLACK AND DUN-LACED.

Then for years we never saw a specimen of any kind, until our friend, Mr. Jas. F. King, of Oxford, produced by accident, I believe, a very good black-laced Satinette hen, with quite a good mask. The late Capt. Dobson also exhibited a Bluette at the Palace with a mask. And quite recently Mr. Lawrence Tipper, of Moseley, has bred one or two nice specimens.

In fact, the thanks of the Fancy are due to this ardent fancier in his determined efforts to try and produce a really first-rate specimen. He has spared neither time nor expense during the past six or seven years, to my knowledge, in his endeavour to breed Vizors, and is certainly, year by year, getting nearer to the accomplishment of his task. I am quite sure every Frill fancier will join me in wishing him ultimate success.

Now we come to the last member of the Satinette family, viz., the black-laced and dun-laced, in the production of which I can lay claim to have had a pretty good hand.

Having produced so many varieties of the Oriental Frill family, it is not to be wondered at that an attempt to produce black and dun-laced Satinettes would be made by our Oriental Frill fanciers in the East. Caridia mentions black-laced in Fulton's book. But if they did

produce any really good specimens in the East they must have kept them in their own country. I am now speaking of the early days, say, 30 to 40 years ago, as none made their appearance in this country.

I remember seeing a hen, a black, which Caridia sent over to Mr. Fred Ashford about 33 years ago, which was partly laced, and which he told him to take great care of, as she was very rare and valuable. After Mr. Caridia's death, his entire stud of birds were sent over to England to be sold. I found amongst them a big headed black cock, crested, and a plain headed black hen, partly laced. So that we have evidence that the Eastern fanciers were making the attempt to produce them.

PRODUCING BLACK-LACED SATINETTES.

The late Mr. Joseph Smith, of London, one of our greatest admirers and breeders of Oriental Frills in the early days, also made an excellent attempt to produce them, and undoubtedly had he lived a few years longer, would have succeeded. I remember a beautifully laced specimen exhibited by Mr. Smith at the Dairy Show about 30 years ago, but, unfortunately, it was clean legged, which means, my young friends, no feathers on shins and feet.

Mr. Ludlow was judge-elect on this occasion, and passed the bird over on this account, otherwise, knowing Mr. Ludlow's love for new varie-

ties so well, I feel sure the bird would have been well up in the prize list. But he did love an Oriental Frill with well clothed shins and feet.

Now at about this time I had a keen desire to try and produce black-laced Satinettes, and being fortunate in securing the big-headed black cock and hen, already referred to in Caridia's collection, although the cock was solid black except for lacing in tail and a slight appearance of a whitish bar, the hen was, as I have said, partly laced.

I got a pair of good eggs from this pair, but disaster soon overtook me, for owing to my own stupidity I lost the hen after sitting on the eggs about a fortnight. They had a nest box on the floor of my loft, and being very anxious not to disturb the hen on the nest whilst cleaning around, I turned the front of the box quietly to the wall and forgot to turn it back again. I went away for a week's journey, and the first thing which attracted my attention on my return when going into my loft was that nest box with opening against the wall. My worst fears were realised. I had paid the penalty for my forgetfulness, for on turning the box round I found the poor hen was dead, and the eggs, of course, cold! Thus disaster befel my first attempt to breed black-laced Satinettes.

Just about at this time I had a blue-laced Satinette hen, with very fine lacing, exceptionally clear ground colour, and with a gay tail. I

mated her up with the big black cock referred to. They bred some of the finest sulphurs I ever saw, but not a single black-laced. However, I made all the use of the black cock I could during that and the next breeding season. I mated a hen bred from the cock to a Brunette cock I had at that time, and from a Brunette hen, bred from this pair, mated to the original black cock, I produced my first black-laced Satinette. This was a cock.

In 1897, I exhibited this bird at the Palace Show, and was delighted to find that Mr. Harry Allsop, the judge-elect on that occasion, had recognised the merits of the new breed by giving him first and challenge trophy for the best young Satinette. This bird was beautifully laced on a nice clear ground, had good muffs, abundance of frill and gullet, with a nice head, and was, in a word, the first black-laced Satinette with good all-round properties that I had ever seen in a show pen !

BRED BLACK-LACED ACCIDENTALLY.

At this particular show I made the acquaintance of Mr. David Watson, of Dulwich, a gentleman who had for some years taken up the breeding of Satinettes (blue-laced), and who informed me, strange to say, that without the least design on his part had bred several black-laced Satinettes, but thinking them of no value had killed



BLACK-LACED SATINETTE HEN.

them ! Accepting an invitation to visit his lofts, I quickly discovered the secret of his producing black-laced. I found amongst his stock a black hen, with laced tail—a bird similar in all respects to the black cock from which mine had descended, and which I discovered had been bought from the loft of Mr. Joseph Smith. This, no doubt, was a bird which had been produced in Mr. Smith's efforts to breed black-laces.

The following year, 1898, Mr. Watson succeeded in breeding an excellent black-laced cock, which he very generously presented to me, and which helped me considerably in further establishing the breed. Each year after that we exchanged birds of this colour, until we had them thoroughly established and reliable. In 1897 I also bred a dun-laced which proved most useful in mating with the blacks. From 1900 on we began to get a nice sprinkling of this colour. In 1901, from a Watson cock, mated to one of my hens, I bred two magnificent hens, one of which won the challenge trophy for best young Satinette, under the late Mr. T. W. H. Ashton. These two hens proved very reliable in producing some really tip-top specimens.

By this time my collection of black and dun-laces were, both in quality and quantity, very strong. I decided to dispose of a few pairs to any fancier who cared to have them. They at once became very popular, both with fanciers and in the show pen, and in many cases where classes

for Satinettes, any colour, were provided, were given the preference.

BLACKS TO DUNS IF POSSIBLE.

With the exception of these black and dun-laced Satinettes, the only birds of this variety in the early days I came across, were two cocks imported, or brought over by the late Mr. Harry Kitchen, from Smyrna about 16 years ago, and an odd hen, which came over from the same country, by a Liverpool fancier. The first cock brought over by Mr. Kitchen had a beautiful skull and was fairly well laced, but the bird died before he could breed anything from him. The other was a big-headed dun, but it lacked what we call quality. But I believe crossed with our English productions it proved a very useful bird in the loft.

And now, my young friends, I have given you the history of black and dun-laced Satinettes. They have been well distributed, and some very fine specimens have been produced by numerous members of our club and others. There remains very little to say regarding the breeding of them. Put black to dun if possible, as by so doing you improve the ground colour, which is important, as the clearer one gets this the clearer and sharper the lacing appears. The same methods apply as in the other colours, so far as head properties are concerned. That is, crested with plain-head, and so on. And as to lacing, it matters little be



BLUE-LACED BLONDINETTE COCK.

THE BLONDINETTE FAMILY.

it broad, medium, or narrow, so long as it is well defined.

THE BLONDINETTE FAMILY.

It is a debateable point which are the most handsome, the Satinettes or the Blondinettes. The showman's motto certainly applies: "Yer pays yer money and takes yer choice." Personally, I like one as well as the other. Both possess charms peculiar and separate from each other. I am not forgetting the fact that I am writing more particularly for the benefit of the novice, and, therefore, I wish to make everything as understandable as possible.

I have often been asked what is the difference between a Blondinette and a Satinette, and as there may still be amongst my young friends some who desire the information, I will point it out.

The Blondinette, of all colours, is what is known in the Fancy generally as a whole coloured or dark shouldered bird, meaning that the main portions of the bird must not be white. Thus in the Blondinette, head, neck, breast, and flights are solid colour, save for the lacing or markings as the case may be. Whereas in the Satinette these features must be solid white.

We will take one feature to explain, the flight feathers. If we were looking casually at a black-laced Blondinette and a black-laced Satinette, so far as the appearance of the wings

ORIENTAL FRILL PIGEONS.

were concerned, there would not appear much difference. But by taking the two birds in your hands and opening the wings out there is a marked difference, and this is one of the points I desire to explain to beginners in Orientals. There are ten primary and ten secondary flight feathers in each wing. Nature has so wisely arranged it that the structure of the feathers are so formed as to curve in opposite directions, thus from a flying point of view giving the bird greater buoyancy and resistance in flight. And if my young friends will take a bird firmly in the left hand and open out the right wing or vice versa, they will plainly see the division between the ten primary and the ten secondary flights, and which takes the shape of the letter V. In the case of the Satinette family, the ten primaries should be white, and the ten secondaries coloured, whereas in the whole family of Blondinettes both primaries and secondaries are coloured.

KEEP TO ONE VARIETY !

This is one difference. We will take another. The Satinette has a white head, neck, and body, including the feathers on shins and feet, whereas in the Blondinette the whole bird is coloured, or should be. I have seen some of the red-laced and yellow-laced which in their nest garb were prettily but lightly laced, which moulted out practically white all over. Such birds, of



DUN-LACED BLONDINETTE HEN.

KEEP TO ONE COLOUR OR VARIETY.

course, are not standard specimens, but are most useful as stud birds. Therefore, should any of my readers breed such a bird—if it has other good features such as good head and beak, good frill, gullet, feathered shins and toes—keep it, and mate it with a bird which is too dark or short of lacing. I have known some very good birds bred from a practically white Blondinette.

Taking the spot tailed varieties first, the blue-laced, the brown-laced, and the sulphur-laced were the first to arrive in this country. I can remember the time when they were plentiful, but, I regret to say, to-day they are getting very scarce. In fact, unless we are careful in preserving and making all the use we can of what remain to us, we shall run the risk of these colours becoming extinct, so far as this country is concerned. Therefore, I would earnestly appeal to all Oriental Frill fanciers who possess these colours to take good care of them, stick to what they have got, and try to increase the much reduced stock. And at this point I would like to throw out a suggestion which I think would not only help the object in view, but would sooner bring novices to the front as Oriental breeders. Of course, it is very nice and a pretty sight to see an aviary of mixed varieties of Oriental Frills, such as Blondinettes, Satinettes, Turbiteens, Bluettes, etc. There is then such a pleasing variety and blend of colour. But I have often thought that if a new beginner

were to make up his mind to select any one breed, and make that particular breed his study, we should, I think, soon see a greater improvement all round.

THE BLUE-LACED FORTY YEARS AGO.

The blue-laced Blondinette of thirty-five to forty years ago was much richer in colour than those of the present day. The body colour was of a much deeper blue, and the lacing was more coloury—a sort of mixture of purple and brown. They were not so good in head properties as birds of more recent years, but they were very handsome and striking. Improvements, however, came as the years passed on. The blue of the body became brighter, and of a paler shade, and the lacing got sharper and better defined. And, if I might point to a time when, I think, the blue-laced was about at its best, it would be twenty-five to thirty years ago. I well remember the studs of Mr. Peter Verdon, Captain Dobson, Mr. Duckworth, T. W. H. Ashton, and other well known breeders of that period, and coming down to later times, say, twenty years ago, H. E. King, of Leicester, and Harry Kitchen, of Leeds.

All these fanciers possessed really grand specimens of the breed, but there has been a gradual decline both in quality and quantity. That beautiful feature, a pure blue-breast colour, is hard to find, and nearly every specimen one

meets with to-day has that undesirable bronzy-reddy coloured breast, caused, no doubt, by crossing them with red laces. This, apart from the fault already mentioned, was wrong in method, the red-laced having a laced tail, and the blue-laced a spot tail—a cross I never advocate if it can be avoided.

The sulphur-laced is a lovely Pigeon, but, alas ! we are confronted with the same sad story. They are few and far between. We had plenty of this charming colour years ago. In fact, down to fifteen years ago, Mr. H. E. King had quite a nice collection of really good birds. I think he still has a few, and so have one or two other fanciers. But that they are scarce I know full well.

Some of my young friends may be saying what is a sulphur Blondinette? It differs from the blue-laced in this respect. The ground colour is diffused with a soft sulphur tint (pale yellow), and the neck and head also. A very good specimen will have a powdering of the same colour. These are termed golden sulphurs, and are rare. The colour of rump differs from the blue-laced, being of a soft fawn shade, and invariably they possess good spot tails.

The brown-laced is also a very pretty variety of the Blondinette family. The head, neck, and breast should be of a pretty shade of reddish brown, with lacing of a similar colour, and with rump and tail in keeping. It is very

ORIENTAL FRILL PIGEONS.

rare to find one not possessing perfect tail spots. All these three colours may, without running any risk of doing harm, be bred in and out together. At the same time, I would advocate in the majority of cases that the different colours be bred separately.

The yellow-laced is also a very smart Pigeon, but this colour must not be mistaken for the cream Blondinette. The yellow has a spot tail, whereas the cream has a laced tail. The colour of the yellow-laced is not so deep, as, for instance, the yellow Magpie, or the yellow Dragoon, being of a paler shade, but very soft in colour. The lacing is very delicate, and at a distance hardly discernible. They are not plentiful, by any means, but are very valuable from a breeding point of view.

RIGIDLY PRESERVE A YELLOW-LACED.

I remember Mr. Caridia telling me how valuable they were in this respect, as you could mate a yellow to any colour you wished, with good results. So if any of my readers are lucky enough to possess a yellow, take good care of it. I may say invariably they are hens. Very seldom cocks are bred this colour.

Blue and silver-barred are very pretty and very popular amongst fanciers. But for some unaccountable reason they are difficult to rear, being blue, a colour held by most authorities to be the nearest to the wild Pigeon, and con-



BLUE-BARRED BLONDINETTE COCK.

PRESERVE A YELLOW-LACED.

sequently the most vigorous,—one would have thought that blue-barred Blondinettes were one of the easiest members of the family to rear, but this certainly has not been my experience. And other breeders of this colour have told me the same. As a rule, they are rather smaller in body than the other members of the family, being very cobby and compact. The body colour should be of a fairly deep but soft shade of blue, and the bar, which I may point out is a great feature, should be as white as possible, with a narrow edging of black. The bar of the early birds of this colour had a fair amount of pink, but to-day this is very seldom seen. The silver-barred is simply the counterpart of the blue, the colour being of a soft shade of silver. They may be bred together or separate colours. That is, two blues or two silvers. This is a variety which requires stimulation. There are none too many in our hands. I should advise using feeders to rear them, as I have found the parents neglect them.

Having dealt with the spot-tailed varieties of the Blondinette, I will now deal with the laced-tailed members of the family. The more important and most beautiful of these, in my opinion, are the black-laced and dun-laced, one being a counterpart of the other.

In breeding these two colours I would like to point out to my young friends that they are so mixed up now that it matters little in selecting a pair whether both be of the same colour, cock

and hen, or that one should be black-laced and the other dun-laced. That is, except for this fact, which I think is worth noting. During the past two or three seasons there has been a preponderance of dun-laced bred, the majority being hens.

This is an instance, according to our theory, of Nature playing us falsely, as it is generally contended that black is a much stronger colour than dun. Therefore, we should have had a preponderance of blacks, especially as black have been used quite as much in the mating as the duns. But this has not been my own experience, and I know it has not been the case with other breeders. So taking this fact into consideration, for the time being, at any rate, I should recommend where possible to mate together one of each colour.

LISTER'S AND WOODS' HENS.

I am a disciple of the school of breeders who place great value on having the hen as good in type and structural properties as possible. I have visited a good few lofts of one kind or another in my time, and no matter what the breed or variety kept, where I have found the stock of hens better than the cocks the breeder has been a consistently successful exhibitor year after year.

I would like to mention two instances outside Oriental Frills. About thirty-seven years

ago I was an enthusiastic breeder of short-faced Antwerps, and I possessed a fairly good stud, although a small one. Being desirous of improving my knowledge of the breed, I paid a visit to Mr. John Lister, of Longlee, Keighley, who was at that particular time one of the most successful exhibitors of Antwerps in the Fancy. His stud consisted of some fifty birds. Mr. Lister first showed me the cocks, which were a grand lot, and amongst which were several that were unbeatable—top scorers, whenever shown. We then went to see the hens. Ah ! my young friends, here was the secret of his success ! Nineteen hens in one loft, and such hens ! Not a bad one amongst the lot ! I never had before and have never seen since, such a magnificent lot of hens. John Lister's name will be found in the prize list of almost every important show since the period I have named, and at the last Manchester Show, with eight exhibits, won five firsts and two thirds.

The other instance is that of Mr. Richard Woods, of Mansfield, the one-time renowned breeder of Dragoons. At the time I speak of I resided at Sutton-in-Ashfield, three miles from Mansfield, and had frequent opportunities of visiting Mr. Woods' lofts. I can assure my readers that it was a great treat to see his wonderful stud of birds—youngsters of the year, yearlings, two-year-olds, three-year-olds ! He had, in fact, such a stud of Dragoons I could safely

say no other fancier in the world possessed ! And if my young friends could get a look at the catalogues of such shows as the Palace, Dairy, Birmingham, and other important shows twenty-five to forty years ago, they would be astonished at the number of prizes which went to Mansfield. Well, good hens were one of the great features of Mr. Woods' success. He placed great value on his best hens.

PRODUCTION OF SOLID COLOURS.

And so I come to the point of mating up Blondinettes. Have the hen as good in structure as you can afford to buy, and so long as she has been bred from well laced parents, don't worry if she herself is not so well laced as you wish, providing her mate is well laced. I have bred beautifully laced youngsters from a solid black or dun hen, mated to a well laced cock. Undoubtedly colour and markings in the majority of cases come from the cock. Type and structural properties come from the hen.

Now in reference to lacing. Although this charming feature in both colours is, and has been, firmly fixed for many years past, don't be alarmed if you breed a small percentage of solid colours. That is, the body colour a solid black or solid dun. But such birds generally possess laced tails, show a slight light coloured bar, and are nearly always extra good in head and beak. I even bred such a bird last season from

the "Climax" cock. It was a black, but with a head better than his sire. I mention this because the uninitiated, having purchased, say, a well laced pair of birds, naturally expect well laced youngsters from them, and in case they bred a solid colour might feel disappointed with their purchase, and entertain doubts as to the birds being of a pure strain.

Another feature in reference to lacing, which I would like to point out to the novice, is this. If in the nest garb your youngsters have the appearance of being brown-laced instead of black, don't be alarmed. Rather shake hands with yourself, and wait patiently until the new feathers begin to strike on the shoulder or the top part of the wing. Those brownny-edged feathers will gradually be replaced with dense black-edged ones, and by the time the bird has completely moulted—which would be in about four months from the time of leaving the nest—you would have a bird worth looking at. Almost invariably youngsters which have these brownny-coloured feathers in the nest turn out the most beautifully laced at the finish. The same remark applies to the black and dun-laced Satinettes.

I think one of the most enjoyable features in breeding Oriental Frills is watching the gradual developments from the nest garb to the completion of the bird's new dress. I have often, when friends have been to see my birds, pointed out to them a particular youngster, saying:—

“Now, take particular notice of this bird. Get the colour and appearance generally well into your mind’s eye, and then ask me to show you the same bird when next you call.”

And I have never known an instance when the same bird has been recognised.

Next in popularity, I think, come the red-laced, and I think the Fancy generally are indebted to the Rev. W. Dale for the interest he has taken during the last four or five years in trying to improve them. Red-laced Blondinettes are generally very good in head properties, and when well laced on a good clear ground colour are very attractive birds. The colour on head, neck, and breast, also of lacing, should be a really good brick-red. Unfortunately, owing doubtless to their superior head properties, fanciers in the past have crossed them with the black-laced, with the result that, so far as breast colour goes, the experiment has proved detrimental to both. The same may be said of crossing the blue-laced Blondinettes with the red. The result in the case of the red-laced has been to produce sooty coloured breasts and tails, and in the blue-laced a bronzy coloured breast, which in this variety should be a clear blue tint. Therefore, in order to get red-laces as they should be, I would strongly recommend the novice to mate red to red, bearing in mind the usefulness, if necessary, of mating a cream or a white with a too solid red.



DUN-LACED BLONDINETTE HEN.

CLASS FOR LAVENDERS AT MANCHESTER.

I am looking forward to seeing a great improvement in this charming colour. I have already seen one or two bred by Mr. Dale which pleased me very much, and I feel sure this ardent fancier is on the right track to produce red-laced Blondinettes which will command admiration.

There is one other member of the laced-tailed variety of Blondinettes which I must mention, and that is the lavender. This colour is practically new to most of us, and although not mentioned in Fulton's Book on Pigeons, the late Mr. Ludlow told me he had seen them many years ago. Be that as it may, the first Blondinette of this colour was a cock exhibited by that sterling fancier, Mr. John Roberts, of Chester, some six or seven years ago at Altrincham. I was judging on that occasion. The bird was shown in the Any Other Colour class, and I had no hesitation, although quite a new colour to me, in placing him first. Ultimately the mother of this bird came into my possession, and the first season I bred from her she produced two lavender cocks.

CLASS FOR LAVENDERS AT MANCHESTER.

But the strange part of my producing lavenders was the fact that at that particular time other fanciers were producing them, and in order to discover what birds of this colour were to be found I guaranteed a class for them at Manchester Show. To my astonishment, as well as pleasure,

on visiting the show I found eleven birds in the class, including the two or three I exhibited in the class. Mr. Eade showed a particularly handsome cock in the class, which, I believe, shortly after the show passed into the hands of Mr. George Leech. I don't pretend to know how to breed them, therefore I cannot at present, at any rate, put my young friends on the right track. We shall have to wait a year or two and see what is produced. It is a charming colour, and well worth cultivation; apart from the colour being so charming, the head properties are above the average.

I have mentioned the creams and the whites, both colours, as a rule, being stock birds. It is very rarely that the creams show lacing distinctive enough to take their corner as show birds. But as I have said, both are most valuable in the loft.

The next variety of the Oriental Frill family to claim our attention is the Oriental Turbit. This is a bonny Pigeon when possessing all the points and features of a good one. I emphasise the remark—a good one—for this reason. The Oriental Turbit is solid coloured or barred, according to the colour of the bird. He cannot furnish us with the beautiful lacing or markings of either the Satinette or Blondinette. Another attribute he is minus of is the grouse leg and feathered toes. Therefore, what qualities or features do we expect in this bird to put him on

something like equality with his brethren from the East? The secret is found principally in his headpiece. To make him a topper his head must be large, and, looked at from any angle you like, round and full, the beak, short and thick. He must also have a wide gape, be wide across the nose, without any flatness on top; and have a good back skull, a bold, full eye, a profusion of both gullet and frill. Given these points, together with a nice erect carriage, we have a Pigeon which commands admiration everywhere.

MR. GEORGE LEECH'S ORIENTAL TURBITS.

The principal colours found to-day are blacks and duns, and, I should say, the finest collection of these colours either in this or any other country, is to be found in the lofts of Mr. George Leech, of Rochdale. It was my pleasure in November, 1916, during the Manchester Show week, to visit Mr. Leech's lofts, and although the weather was not ideal for the purpose I enjoyed the treat immensely. It was not a question of an odd good one here and there. There were good ones all along the line.

In addition to blacks and duns I have seen blues, silvers, reds, and yellows. But so far as this country is concerned, very few of these colours remain.

The Oriental Turbit should possess from

seven to ten white flights a side, as in the Satinette. The tail should be the same colour as the wings or sides, although one, if not the best, black Oriental Turbit ever imported from the East, had a white tail. This bird belonged to the late Mr. T. W. H. Ashton, of Altrincham. Unfortunately, this bird escaped from his loft soon after coming into Mr. Ashton's possession, and was never heard of again. This was a very unfortunate mishap, so far as the Fancy was concerned, as, undoubtedly, this wonderful Pigeon would have left his mark upon succeeding generations of Oriental Turbits.

Oriental Turbits were mostly bred in the interior of Asia Minor, and it was in pursuit of them that our dear old friend and ardent admirer of Oriental Frills, the late Mr. Harry Kitchen, of Leeds, nearly fell a victim to robbery and violence. He was shadowed by a gang of thieves, and but for the timely warning of his guide and the accomplishment of a fine bit of sprinting, poor Harry would, undoubtedly, have gone under.

Mr. Caridia tells us in Fulton's Book on Pigeons that the Oriental Turbit has played a very important part in the production of the Turbiteen, one of the most striking varieties, in my opinion, of the whole of the Oriental Frill family, and of which I shall speak about presently.

ORIENTAL TURBITS AND TURBITEEN CROSSES.

The Oriental Turbit has also done a good deal in the past to improve the English Turbit. I am now speaking of thirty to forty years ago. The same may be said of the Turbiteen, for do we not see traces of the Turbiteen cross occasionally, even at the present day, as shown by the badging and markings of some of our English Turbits?

As regards the crossing of the Oriental Turbit and the English Turbit, my mind goes back to a small but very select stud of black and dun English at Derby some thirty-five years ago, which were considerably improved by the introduction of one, if not the most perfect black Oriental Turbit hens I ever saw. This small stud held its own for many years at our best shows, each year the owner selling birds at highly remunerative prices.

I do not know that I have much more to say about the Oriental Turbit, but I would impress breeders of them with the importance of aiming at breeding birds with massive head properties. Keep the head as large and full as possible. Do not allow them to degenerate in this respect. Get also a short, thick beak, wide gape, full eye, frill and gullet, with the colour as rich as you can get it. And then, as I have

ORIENTAL FRILL PIGEONS.

said, with nice bold and erect carriage, you have a Pigeon that commands admiration, especially amongst lovers of any short-faced variety.

The Turbiteen, in my opinion, is one of the most fascinating varieties of the Oriental Frill family. I do not say this with the idea of recommending my young friends to take up the breeding of them for a start, because I feel sure they would in all probability be disappointed at the result. The old saying that it takes more than one swallow to make a summer applies in a similar sense to the breeding of Turbiteens, as, although the markings are fairly well fixed, so far as the cheeks and frontal are concerned, it is difficult to breed them without foul markings on other parts of the body. All the same, a really well marked Turbiteen is a very distinguished Pigeon.

It is somewhat remarkable, but on numerous occasions when comparatively the younger fanciers of Oriental Frills have visited my lofts, it was seldom they took any notice of the Turbiteens. The birds they appeared to take the most notice of would be either the laced Blondinettes or the Satinettes. On paying a second visit they might just venture a remark or two about the Turbiteens, such as:—

“Rather peculiar birds those. What do you call them?”

But on a third visit my friends would be anxious to see more of them, and would take

THE FAMOUS EIGHTEEN-PENNY COCK.

quite a keen interest in the variety. Finally, they would take up the breed.

The colours are black, dun, red, yellow, blue, silver, blue chequers, silver chequers, and bronzes. In size they are a trifle larger than the Satinette. The head should be large and full, with good strength of beak, plenty of gullet and frill, and well clothed shins and toes. There is no hard and fast lines as to size of frontal spots and cheek markings so long as they are evenly balanced. Personally, I like good sized markings, as I think such give the bird a more striking and distinguished appearance. They should have a white tail, and from seven to ten white primary flights a side.

In selecting colours for breeding purposes, the following will go well together:—Two blacks, or a black and a dun; black and silver chequer; black and red; two blues, or a blue and a silver or blue and blue chequer; two reds; two yellows or one of each colour; bronze with either black, dun, or red.

THE FAMOUS “EIGHTEENPENNY” COCK.

The Turbiteen is perhaps one of the hardest members of the Frill family. He is a good breeder, and feeds his young very well. One of the best pairs I ever had was a black cock and a silver chequer hen. As already mentioned, soon after the late Mr. Caridia died, the whole of his

stud of Frills was brought over from Smyrna to Birmingham to be disposed of, and in the collection, which, by the way, was a very fine one, I found this black cock and chequer hen mated together, and which I secured. The first season they bred and reared five pairs of youngsters, all blacks, and there was not a waster amongst the lot ! Quite half of them were tip-top show birds, and which, I may add, held their own in the keenest competition for several years in succession, and their descendants for many years afterwards.

I think it might interest my young friends were I to relate a somewhat unique experience I once had in Turbiteens with what became known as the "Eighteenpenny Cock." I was judging Pigeons in the early part of 1905 at Banbury, and in the gift class was exhibited a crested black Turbiteen cock. He was shown by that sterling and enthusiastic fancier, Mr. Wheeler, of the same town. I liked the look of this cock, and gave him second prize. At the auction I secured him, through the good offices of Mr. Wheeler, for 1s. 6d., as I had to leave the show to catch my train. I mated him to a nice black hen, and they bred and reared seven youngsters.

The best of the bunch was a cock. I exhibited this bird on seven occasions, as follows:—Dairy Show, 1st and challenge cup (outright), 1st Erdington, and 1st Walsall, under Mr. Allsop; 1st Wolverhampton, 1st and three



CRESTED BLUE TURBITEEN COCK.

DOMINOES PRACTICALLY EXTINCT.

challenge cups (all outright), under Mr. Clement Sharp; 2nd Leicester, under Mr. Blackmore; and 1st and special Walthamstow, under Mr. C. A. House. I sold this cock and his father to Mr. Sharp for £12, and I disposed of the other youngsters for decent prices, one pair to go abroad. So that totalled up, my eighteenpenny cock was not a bad investment. Of course, a stroke of luck of this kind does not come often in a lifetime.

DOMINOES PRACTICALLY EXTINCT.

The last member of the Oriental Frill family I have to mention is the Domino. Therefore, it is domino in a double sense. But, alas! so far as I am aware, the breed is extinct so far as England is concerned. We never had many of them. I had a small stud some twenty-two years ago, the best of them being sent to me by that really good fancier, Mr. J. C. Lyell, who then resided, I believe, at Dundee. The colours were chiefly blacks. I found them difficult to rear, and after keeping them two or three seasons disposed of the lot to Mr. R. G. B. Chase, of Birmingham. He kept them a few years and bred one or two decent specimens. Eventually, I believe, the stud passed into the hands of Mr. Cetti, of Dudley. Since then I have neither heard nor seen anything of them.

The Domino has a masked head, similar to the Modena. It has a frill and gullet, but

minus foot feathering; is a very smart Pigeon, and when well and solidly masked very striking.

Having endeavoured to treat upon the different varieties of the Oriental Frill family, I will give a few hints as to feeding, management, etc. Not that I wish to assume my management is superior to others who have had years of experience of the breed, but having been told so often by Oriental and other fanciers alike that few, if any, put down Oriental Frills in the show pen in better form than I do, I suppose my method of keeping them has something to do with the results.

First of all, I think it will be as well to speak about the hardness of the breed. Notwithstanding the number of years Oriental Frills have been established in this country, I feel sure there are a goodly number of fanciers who imagine they are delicate in constitution and in consequence require special treatment. Of course, I allude to fanciers who have never kept them. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for thinking this is their delicate plumage, as on many occasions when attending shows I can testify, through over hearing conversation and remarks from visitors going the round and admiring the birds. Another reason, I think, is the fact now pretty well known that they originally came from a much warmer climate than our own. That is, a country where the fig tree grows luxuriantly, and choice fruits and flowers in profusion grow in the open; a

FOOD CAUSED DEATH.

country whose inhabitants we associate with sun-burnt faces; a country where frosts and snows, fogs, and many wet and cheerless days are hardly known, and where the Frill could bask in the sunshine from early morn to dewy eve.

FOOD CAUSED DEATHS.

I admit that when Oriental Frills were first, and for some time after, imported into this country, disastrous results followed. Birds sickened and died. I remember Mr. Peter Verdon told me that out of a consignment of £300 worth he had over from Smyrna, in less than a month from arrival he lost every bird! But this loss did not in the least damp his ardour. The loss served to teach not only himself, but other importers a lesson. Food, as we all know, whether applied to birds, animals, or human beings, is an important factor to their and our own welfare, and in the case of Oriental Frills it was not so much the change of climate as the change of food. The cereals indigenous to the East were for the most part quite different to the cereals in this country.

I remember seeing a mixture of the corn they used in Smyrna for their Pigeons, which, with the exception of wild tares, was totally different to anything I had ever seen, and the cost of which was very little. The consequence was that birds fed and reared on this kind of food could not stand our English corn. The fare was too rich

for them. The same thing would happen to the natives themselves after their simple food of rice, fruit, and vegetables. Bring them over here and regale them on our good old English fare, and plenty of it, and indigestion and other kindred ailments would quickly follow.

VALUE OF FRESH AIR.

And so the dainty frilled Pigeons had to gradually get accustomed both to our system of feeding and our English climate. But when once they had got over the change their troubles on this score were at an end.

It is a good few years now since we had any importations from the East, and I should say that there is hardly a single imported bird in any of our lofts at the present day. Further, I can assure my young friends that all the old trouble on the score of feeding and climate is entirely a thing of the past, and that the Oriental Frill of to-day is as hardy as any other of our high-class English Pigeons. With judicious feeding it can digest the richest English fare you can provide for it. As my readers will have gathered, I have kept Oriental Frills for thirty-five years, and during the whole of that time the mortality has been very small, especially when we take into consideration that for the greater part of the time my lofts have contained from 100 to 250 birds.

I am a great believer in fresh air, and my lofts are constructed so that the birds get plenty of it both night and day, winter and summer. It is the greatest mistake in the world to coddle Pigeons. One of the greatest breeders of Carriers of the present day treats his birds in the same way. I wonder what some of our old Carrier breeders would have said to such treatment. And now I think I have said enough to convince anyone on the score of hardiness of the Oriental Frill.

We will next treat on the housing or lofts, and as my own lofts and aviaries have proved successful both in keeping the birds healthy and in good condition I will try and describe them. Their design is not original, so far as I am concerned, as I copied the idea from the lofts of Mr. Richard Woods.

Mr. Woods possessed a wonderful strain of blue Dragons. They were very sound in colour, very rich in colour of eye, with lovely damson ceres, a feature which, I think I am right in saying, very few, if any, other breeder of blue Dragons possessed. I remember it was a very sore point amongst fanciers, and at nearly every show where Mr. Woods exhibited, wranglings and most reprehensible remarks were often indulged in as to the genuineness of those lovely damson ceres. In fact, at more than one show I have seen Mr. Woods' birds passed over by the judge because he thought the eye ceres were faked!

But although white handkerchiefs were employed, with moisture, to try and extract any colouring matter, it was always without avail. Such treatment did not, however, disturb "The Dragoon King" very much. He knew quite well that it was only a question of time and that all such ignorance would be dispelled. When asked, as oft times he was, how he produced those beautiful ceres, he would reply: "Obtain the right strain of birds and keep them as Nature dictates to you."

DICTATES OF NATURE.

My young friends, there is a lot in those five words—"As Nature dictates to you." Keep the sentence well in mind. This was the chief feature in Mr. Woods' success. I don't say it was all, because the sound colour was the foundation. His blues were sound in colour all over. But the birds in the daytime had the advantage of fresh air and the sun, Mr. Woods' lofts being so arranged that the birds could utilise the roof, which was open to the sky, and was practically as good as flying out in the open. The birds having their liberty, and especially as the aviaries were spacious and a good height, did very well. I have given this description to emphasise the value of having plenty of sun and fresh air in your lofts and aviaries.

When I resided at Knowle, about eleven miles out of Birmingham, I built my lofts

LOFTS AND AVIARIES.

exactly on Mr. Woods' plan, utilising the roof, which, I may say, had laths, raised a few inches from the tiles, about two inches broad, and placed about eighteen inches apart. But when I came to Moseley, and built new lofts, I dispensed with the accommodation on the roof, the reason being that I did not wish to alarm my neighbours with too lofty a structure. Another reason was that I did not think, in the case of Oriental Frills, it was absolutely necessary, so long as the aviaries were fairly roomy in order that the birds could get plenty of exercise. My present lofts, including aviaries, are 40 feet long by 18 feet deep, and are divided into five compartments. This gives one area to each loft of 8 feet by 6 feet, with an aviary of 12 feet by 8 feet. The height of the lofts to apex of roof is 10 feet, and the height of the aviaries is about 7 feet.

LOFTS AND AVIARIES.

The floors of the lofts are double boarded and the floors of the aviaries are covered to a depth of twelve inches with hard, burnt red ashes, which I obtained from a colliery. I first tried our local sand, which is reddish in colour, but this proved useless, as apart from its clogging nature in wet weather, it coloured the tails and foot feather of the birds. I think ordinary hard, burnt engine ashes would answer quite well. But riddle them, first putting the big clinkers at the bottom and thus making a good foundation.

Afterwards put the riddled ones on the top. You then obtain a natural drainage.

The lofts are built of inch boards. The back portion, which faces North, is double boarded, with a vacuum between which is packed with sawdust. The roofs of the lofts are tiled. The fronts of the aviaries face South, and are wired with 16 gauge diamond-shaped wire. The whole top of the aviaries is likewise wired, but the lower part of the aviaries is boarded up to about 18 inches. There is only one entrance, which is at the East end, and opposite this door are entrances to each of the other four aviaries. The doors to each loft are divided in two parts, the lower portion being wood and the upper half being glazed like an ordinary dwelling-house window.

Inside the lofts there are strong wire shutters attached to a string and pulley, which can be lowered or pulled up at will. It is very rarely indeed that the upper glazed portion of the doors is closed. Unless it be a very wild night I never use them. Only the wire shutter is dropped so that the birds get plenty of fresh air during the night. This wire shutter is also very useful in the day time when the weather is very wet and you wish to keep the birds inside.

I use coarse pine sawdust round the sides of the loft floors, and a white sand, which I obtain from Leighton Buzzard, for the middle of the floors. The floors are cleaned once or twice a



BLACK TURBITEEN COCK.

IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT FEEDING.

week as occasion requires. Each aviary has a good sized zinc bath with a broadish rim. For drinking fountains I use Hateley and Bassetts' white enamelled ones, which are in three parts and very easily kept clean. My birds have a bath once every week, and it is a treat to see them enjoy it. In each loft I have a wooden grit box. These boxes I obtained from Mr. Richard Woods. They are simple and inexpensive, and are kept supplied with fresh grit each week. Don't forget the importance of grit! Remember it is just as essential to the birds' welfare as our teeth are to us in grinding up our food.

IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT FEEDING.

Now as to feeding. This is a very important matter. If you are to keep your birds in health and good condition, be careful to select corn that is perfectly sound, free from all taint and mustiness. Nothing upsets a bird sooner than soft, badly garnered corn. It must be sound and sweet. My mixture is composed of maple peas, tares, and dari. The latter is a most suitable food for Orientals. In the breeding season I add a little sound English wheat, and a little small Indian corn—Cinqintina for preference.

Now, there is a great art in feeding. I am quite sure there is more harm done in overfeeding than there is in underfeeding, both from a

breeding point of view and a health point of view, especially with the hens. If you get your hens too fat, you get egg-bound trouble in the early spring, and, I think, from the same cause a good many of their eggs, although fertile right up to the chipping stage, fail to hatch out. You can afford to be rather more generous with the cocks in the matter of food, but even with them I would warn my young friends against overfeeding. Judicious feeding comes by experience. My advice is—leave off when you think they would like a little more.

An important matter to look for, especially when feeding on the floor, is for any bird that is not picking up properly. Some short-beaked Pigeons are apt to starve themselves, if not watched carefully. See that all are getting their proper quantity of food. Oriental Frills are no exception. I like feeding my birds broadcast on the floor, but if I find a bird that dodges his corn, so to speak, and makes three or four attempts to pick a grain up, I either put corn in a feeding trough or use a hopper. The only objection I have to feeding from hoppers is that some birds are apt to gorge themselves, which, of course, is not good for them.

DRESSING THE BIRDS' BEAKS.

Another important matter, hardly necessary to mention, is that clean water vessels and

clean fresh water daily should be supplied. And in the matter of baths see that these are emptied as soon after bathing as possible. If left the birds will drink the dirty water. Another thing that requires looking after occasionally, is insect pests. I refer to the feather louse and the body louse. The latter generally congregate near the vent, the former mostly in the flight feathers. But a dusting of Keating's Insect Powder will quickly settle them. You can purchase small bellows from seed merchants to use with this powder.

Still another matter which requires occasional attention, with some birds more often than others, is the cutting of their beaks. Always carry in your pocket a small pair of sharp scissors for this purpose. The upper mandible of some birds grows very long at the point, and for the bird's comfort, and to enable it to pick up food properly, this point requires cutting. But be careful not to cut the quick or you will cause bleeding. Just take off the horny portion. Some birds do not require any attention at all in this direction, but others require to be constantly seen to.

Just a few hints now as to mating up time and breeding. There is no advantage to be gained by mating up too early. In fact, quite the reverse. I know that many Pigeon fanciers associate St. Valentine's Day as the correct time to mate up their birds. This is a pretty and

poetical idea, I agree, and so far as fanciers themselves are concerned, and if the mate is a suitable one, I should say—Why waste time? Get on with the business! But so far as Pigeons are concerned, I should say wait a few weeks longer, especially in a variety like Oriental Frills. We often get some very treacherous weather in February, so I should advise mating up about the second week in March.

Now I will suppose a fancier intends mating up, say, three pairs. Well, “take time by the fet-locks,” as the old man said, and provide, fully two months prior to mating, three pairs of feeders. Long-faced Tumblers (Baldheads for preference), small sized Flying Homers, Modern Magpies, and Tipplers are all good feeders. Do not select young birds for this purpose. Three or four year old birds are preferable, being steadier, more used to their duties, and consequently more reliable. Mate the Orientals up six days before mating your feeders. The reason for this is that the feeders go to nest sooner than the Frills, and it is an advantage if the Frills lay two or three days before the feeders, and by transferring the young from Frills to feeders they get the advantage of the extra soft food. Of course, when both lay on the same date you can transfer the eggs, if you wish.

On this question of using feeders for Oriental Frills I may mention that up to fifteen years ago I never used any, for the reason that I had no

necessity to do so. The Frills were all that could be desired in rearing their own young. Nineteen years ago, from thirty pairs, I reared 132 birds in my present lofts, and I had not a single feeder on the place ! Whether, however, it is the number of years of confinement in aviaries or not that has affected their rearing instincts, I cannot say, but, undoubtedly, Frills have deteriorated in this respect.

All the same, I relate a remarkable instance of a young Satinette cock taking on paternal duties as a feeder. The occurrence took place whilst residing at Knowle over 20 years ago. In a Norwich three-decker, I had in the middle compartment a pair of blue-laced Satinettes feeding one young ; it was not their own, but one I had placed under their care at about a week old. They fed it quite nicely up to about three weeks old, and then took a dislike to it; the hen, if you please, being the chief offender; for, in addition to not feeding it, the hen had commenced to peek it about the head. I had in the upper compartment of the three-decker a young blue-laced Satinette cock, six weeks old, and which was doing well for himself; so just for a temporary expedient, and to save the youngster from further harm, I placed it with the six-weeks-old bird. The three-weeks-old youngster was very hungry, and immediately he caught sight of his six-weeks-old brother, waddled up to him, squealing to be fed, and, to

my great astonishment, the older bird began that peculiar movement known to all Pigeon breeders—a-ducking and a-jerking of the head, and straight away fed the squeaker ; and, moreover, brought him up until he could do for himself. This fact reminded me forcibly of Darwin's theory in animal life of “ the survival of the fittest.”

NEST BOXES AND BASKETS.

For breeding boxes I have found nothing better than such as are used for packing New Zealand butter and margarine in. They are about 13 inches square. Use two of these for each pair of birds. Put them mouth to mouth about nine inches apart. Use eight-inch earthenware nest pans and put one in each box. I place a little rough cut sawdust at the bottom, and on the top of this a layer of oat straw for preference, cut into six or seven inch lengths, and well worked between your fingers to take out the stiffness.

Just a few hints as to showing. It is of the highest importance that you should put down your birds in the best possible condition, especially in a Pigeon like the Oriental Frill. To my mind, nothing looks so wretched as one shown in dirty condition. Use well made baskets, with the partitions the same width at both ends, so that the bird can comfortably turn round if he wishes, which on a long railway journey adds much to his comfort. I have

found nothing better for the bottoms of the baskets than a layer of two inches of finely cut, clean, sweet, wheat straw. If cut from a quarter to half an inch in length and used in the quantity named it will rarely be found that your birds will not arrive at the show as clean as when you started them from home. Many a good bird's chance has been spoilt by the exhibitor's carelessness in this matter, some not even putting any material whatever in their baskets. It is not advisable to give birds too generous a feed prior to starting them on their journey. Half a crop full is plenty, and is much better for them.

Another little matter which is useful to bear in mind when exhibiting is to see that your birds get away early. Don't wait till the last train to take them to their destination, or you might see a label on your pens, "Too late for competition!"

END OF A PLEASANT DUTY.

And now my pleasant task is finished. I started out, as I said at the commencement, to try and help the novice or beginner in the cultivation of Oriental Frills, and to awaken an interest in others who have never kept them. If I have succeeded in my humble attempt I shall feel gratified.

I repair to the ingle nook to enjoy my evening pipe. My thoughts go back to some of the early devotees of the breed, and through

the smoke I see such fanciers as Joseph Smith, Peter Verdon, J. W. Ludlow, Capt. Dobson, A. Blackmore, T. W. H. Ashton, C. Duckworth, J. C. Fraser, Frank Gibson, Geo. Hall, Harry Kitchen, Geo. Ledson, Whineray, and many others whose names for the moment escape my memory; all lovers of the Oriental Frill Pigeon, and who spared no expense in promoting its welfare. Alas, few of these fanciers remain with us to-day. Some have long since gone to their last home; others are scattered abroad. Therefore, it is up to the younger generation of fanciers that Oriental Frills, one of the most beautiful varieties of Pigeons in existence, is as well cared for in the future as it has been in the past.

APPENDIX.

STANDARD FOR ORIENTAL FRILLED PIGEONS.

COMPRISING :—BLONDINETTES, SATINETTES, BRUNETTES, SULPHURETTES, BLUETTES, SILVERETTES, VIZORS, TURBITEENS, DOMINOES, AND ORIENTAL TURBITS, AS DRAWN UP AND ADOPTED BY THE ORIENTAL FRILL CLUB.

GENERAL FORMATION FOR ALL VARIETIES.

Head—Large, round, high, broad and well arched, forming a continuous unbroken curve from neck to tip of beak, well filled in between eye and beak.

Cheeks—Full and chubby.

Beak—Short, thick, and close fitting.

Beak Wattle—Small and of fine texture.

Eye—Large, bright, and prominent.

Cere—Small and smooth.

Crest—1. Needle-pointed, upright, and central.

2. Shell crest, even ridge, and wide spread.

3. Plain head.

Gullet—Full and well developed, falling from near tip of under mandible to start of frill.

Neck—Thick, broad at base, well arched, and full under jowl.

Frill—As much as possible, well covering the chest.

Flights and Tail—Proportionate, and well set; former carried close up to body.

Legs—Moderate length, grouse muffed, the feathers continuing to toe nails, completely covering shanks and feet.

Form—Compact, round, and plump.

Carriage—Erect, active, and dignified.

THE SATINETTE.

Color—*Beak*, pale flesh; *Eye*, very dark brown; *Cere*, flesh; *Head*, *Neck*, and *Body underparts*, white; *Shoulders*, tri-colour, *i.e.*, ground tint, almost colorless, with fine lines of chestnut brown and purple black edging at lower extremity. It is immaterial whether markings are laced, arrow-pointed, spangled, or tipped, or whether heavy, medium, or fine markings. It is in clearness,

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evenness, regularity, and accuracy of feather markings that perfection is attained, and this is generally found in the lighter or palest grounded birds, where the beauty and clear contrast is most obvious. *Thighs* are more or less colored, the less the better, white preferred; *Flights*, white, and seven to ten aside; *Tail*, dark purple blue downwards from line across rump, the usual black band at lower extremity, upon which should be on each and every feather a large round *white* spot ("peacock's eye") clearly defined. In the lighter colored birds, however, this white takes the form of a band, and if well and clearly defined is of equal value. Shafts of feather dark. *Feet*, bright red, but not visible.

SULPHURETTES.

Are same as above, showing pale sulphur ground color, instead of pale pink-brown on shoulders.

THE BRUNETTE.

Is similar to the above, only differing in shade of color, having a silver-grey tint; the pencillings being of a very dark red-brown, fawn, or French grey, with tail of same shade.

THE BLUETTE.

Clear blue shoulders, with white bars edged with black. Dark blue tail, with white spots edged with black.

THE SILVERETTE.

Pale silver-grey shoulders, with white bars edged with the darker shade. Grey tail, with white spots edged with dark grey.

THE VIZOR.

Differs only from the Satinette in that the head should be dark bronzy purple clear cut to a well defined line running across the neck, from bottom of gullet to back of crest, dividing the dark colored head from the white. Body, frill, rump, and legs should be pure white and free from foul feathers; thighs as little dark as possible. The dark tail clearly shown at rump, and white primary flights seven to ten.

BLACK AND DUN LACED SATINETTES.

Are of the very palest shade (almost white), with a fair lacing all over shoulders. Tail white, with black or dun edging.

"THE DOMINO."

Color—Black, blue, silver, and dun, with and without bars, and chequers of same shades. *Beak*, black or dark. *Eye*, red and

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yellow gravel. *Cere*, flesh; white body and thighs; colored head, "which should extend low down in front of neck, forming a bib, as in a Nun." *Shoulders and tail* of same sound color all through. White *flights*, seven to ten a side. *Legs*, clean, free from feathers.

BLONDINETTES.

Like Satinettes, are of various patterns of markings, viz.: "*Laced*," "*arrow-pointed*," "*spangled*," and "*tipped*," and of various shades and degrees of these from light to dark, and from fine to heavy. The varieties are: Blue, Silver, Red, Yellow, Black, Dun, and Sulphur. These are of the variegated or "*laced*" kinds; the beaks of which should be black, flesh and horn to harmonise with each color; *Eyes* should be red or yellow; *i.e.*, a "*coloured eye*." The head, neck, frill, and tail of a darker shade. Whatever the color of each, it must be of the richest and purest of shade: Red, Yellow, Blue, Silver, or Sulphur, and the markings clearly defined; the Blue-laced being especially beautiful about the head and neck, with a rich and brilliant bronzy hue, which sometimes terminates at junction line of neck and back; and in others in a dark head, as the veil of a Nun. These latter sort are invariably very clear, light, and attractive in variegation, the completeness of which is exemplified *all over*, even to neck, breast, back, belly, and thighs. In a thoroughly good laced Blondinette the bronzy colour should permeate the whole plumage, flights, and tail; the latter of which should have the large round white spot or band clearly defined upon every feather, whilst the former also should have an oblong white spot at each extremity of flight feather. *Legs and feet* grouse-feathered to tips of toes.

BLACK AND DUN LACED.

These are two sub-varieties, in which the "*lacing*" proper is more pronounced and conspicuous. In these, each feather is evenly edged with its respective colors, varying from heavy to fine, and from dark to light lacing. Tail and flights also fairly edged throughout; and neck also fairly variegated. Breast, back, belly, thighs, and muffs also edged.

BARRED BLONDINETTES.

Are of plain, clear Blue, or Silver; each sort with clear white bars with a fine line of black upon lower edge of each. Tail and flights with well-defined and clear large white spot or band near to extremity of each.

"THE TURBITEEN."

Color—Black, dun, red, yellow, blue with black bars, silver with black and brown bars, blue chequered, silver chequered, red chequered, red-barred and yellow-barred, all the self colors of the very deepest lustre. *Beak*—the upper mandible black and very

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dark horn, the lower mandible white. *Eye*, dark brown, dark ruby, and orange. *Cere*, pale flesh. White body, tail flights, and legs. Colored head-markings and shoulders. They are usually found very foul thighed, but this should be considered an imperfection. Head-markings should consist of three equal-sized spots, the frontal one commencing at the wattle and covering the forehead, heart-shaped; the cheek spots should extend from the base of the lower mandible, under the eye to the ear, forming a crescent-shaped oval. There should be a distinct white line running from beak to eye, dividing the frontal and cheek spots. Birds with front spot only are admissible. The gullet should be white, dividing the cheek marks.

ORIENTAL TURBITS.

Blacks, Blues, Silvers, Reds, Yellows, Duns, Chequers, and Creamies. Each sort should have the sides and shoulders marked in perfect elliptical form, with their respective colors deep, rich, and pure. All else should be white, as in our English turbit. There are, however, two kinds (both admissible as show birds), viz.: *white-tailed*, and *dark-tailed*, the latter sort being the more numerous; but the white tails are supposed to have been the original.



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The oriental frill pigeon;